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BOOK NOTICES

A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

By Alfred Plummer. (International Critical Commentary.) New York: Scribner, 1915. Pp. lviii+404. \$3.00 net.

The death of Professor Briggs in 1913, followed by that of Professor Driver in 1914, left Dr. Plummer the only survivor of the distinguished group of general editors which had planned and supervised the International Critical Commentary. President Francis Brown, of Union Seminary, is now associated with Dr. Plummer in the general editorship, representing America and the Old Testament in the editorial duumvirate.

Dr. Plummer is one of the most distinguished of New Testament commentators. He has contributed to the present series a notable commentary on the Gospel according to Luke and has collaborated with Bishop Robertson on the commentary on First Corinthians. He counseled with Mr. Allen in the preparation of the commentary on Matthew, and afterward produced a valuable independent commentary on that Gospel, undertaking to supplement Mr. Allen's somewhat too mechanical work. No one has wrought more notably upon the series than Dr. Plummer.

A host of problems gather about Second Corinthians, and Dr. Plummer has dealt candidly with them all. He thinks it almost certain (p. xvi) that Paul made an intermediate visit to Corinth before writing his third letter to the Corinthians. He believes the new disturbance at Corinth to be due to the arrival of fanatical Jewish Christian teachers who had stirred up hostility and suspicion against Paul (p. xxxvi). As to the great question of the unity or integrity of the letter as we have it, Dr. Plummer holds that chaps. 8 and 9 quite clearly belong with chaps. 1-7, but that chaps. 10-13 quite as clearly belong to another letter, probably the painful, regretted one which preceded and is mentioned in the fourth letter, our Second Corinthians, chaps. 1-9. The internal considerations pointing to this view are certainly weighty and virtually decisive. Yet Dr. Plummer does not go so far as to transpose the two letters in his commentary, but discusses chaps. 10-13 after chaps. 1-9, although chaps. 1-9 have to be understood in the light of the previous letter, chaps. 10-13. This is now so clear and certain that it would have been well to give a brief introduction to each of the two letters setting forth

the historical situation which called it forth. Such a constructive historical statement would have greatly facilitated the reader's approach to the two letters. Dr. Plummer believes that the passage, 6:14-7:1 is not a part of the earliest of Paul's letters to Corinth but was placed by the apostle in the somewhat unsuitable place in which we find it in our Second Corinthians.

Dr. Plummer's method is to present in paraphrase the contents of each succeeding section and then comment upon all its important phrases. The excellence of these paraphrases is a striking feature of the book. The notes are both learned and illuminating. Sanity and sympathy are among Dr. Plummer's qualities as a commentator. He gives up the problem of the nature of Paul's affliction, the "thorn for the flesh," of 12:7, with the candid statement that the evidence is insufficient for a conclusion. The date of the Second Epistle, which Dr. Plummer doubtless means to cover the two letters represented in it, is fixed in the autumn of A.D. 55, to the spring of which year Dr. Plummer assigns our First Corinthians.

The statement of p. 1 that "In nearly all his letters, including the Pastorals, St. Paul introduces himself as an Apostle" is extreme, in view of his failure to do so in First and Second Thessalonians, Philippians, and Philemon. Since the Pastorals can hardly be from Paul, the fact would seem to be that in four out of ten probably genuine letters from Paul's hand he does not introduce himself as an apostle. Dr. Plummer is no doubt right in rejecting the theory that II Cor. 6:14-7:1 is a fugitive leaf from Paul's earliest letter to Corinth, but he might well have pointed out that ancient letters were not on leaves but rolls, and that in this case, as in that of the supposed displacements in John, it must be remembered that the ancient book- and letter-form was a roll, not a gathering of leaves. Any leaf hypothesis for such displacements is an anachronism.

The new commentary is decidedly more clearly printed than have been some of its predecessors in the series. The Greek is not always exact (e.g., *εἰσέχομαι* for *εἰσδέχομαι*, p. xlix; *τοῦτον*, p. 125; *ὕδρην*, p. 127; *καταλύθη*, p. 143; *πάντι*, p. 228; *παλαίσμα*, p. 324; *ἐπενθήσατε*, p. 370). Faine, p. lviii, should be Feine. Perhaps the printer is also responsible for this sentence: "Did Timothy . . . reach Corinth and was unsuccessful there?" (p. xiv). The reference to Herodotus 9:23 (p. 324) should be 9:33.